



# The Native Americans

Many Native American peoples inhabited present-day North Carolina in the 1500s. Groups speaking **Algonquian** languages often lived in the eastern and coastal areas. Algonquian peoples usually lived in large family groups. These groups included grandparents, parents, and children. Their rectangle-shaped houses were made of grass mats placed over a wooden frame. Wooden walls surrounded villages. The Algonquian planted their fields nearby.



# Algonquian Food

Algonquian peoples grew beans and squash with several kinds of maize (corn). They also planted tobacco for use in religious ceremonies. The men of the village hunted deer and other game in the area's thick forests. These animals provided meat. They also provided skins for clothes and antlers and bones for tools. The Algonquian fished from canoes made of hollowed-out tree trunks. They used nets and wooden traps to catch fish.

**A 16th century sketch shows an Algonquin village in North Carolina.**





About 80,000  
Iroquois people  
live in North  
America today.



**Iroquois first met European settlers in the 16th century.**

## The Iroquoian People

Peoples speaking Iroquoian languages competed and sometimes fought with the Algonquian. The Tuscarora was one of the largest groups. They also farmed, hunted, and fished. The Cherokee may have built as many as 200 villages along the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west. The Catawba were a separate people. They spoke a language related to peoples of the Great Plains. The region's many Native Americans would face challenges from the Europeans in the next century.



Original  
13 Colonies

Area  
enlarged

VIRGINIA

MARYLAND

Appalachian Mountains

Salem •

• Guilford Court House

Edenton •

C H E R O K E E

Raleigh •

T U S C R O R A

NORTH CAROLINA

Bath •

King's Mountain •

New Berne •

C A T A W B A

Cape Fear River

SOUTH CAROLINA

Brunswick •

Wilmington •

Cape Fear

GEORGIA



ATLANTIC OCEAN

— Colonial boundaries  
--- Present boundaries

0 miles 100  
0 km 100



# The Carolina Colony

European explorer Giovanni da Verrazano passed the shores of modern-day North Carolina in 1524. Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto may have entered the Appalachian Mountains around 1540 in search of gold. Two English ships sent by Sir Walter Raleigh landed at Roanoke Island in 1584. They traded with the local Native Americans. Europeans soon began to establish trading posts, settlements, and farms in the area.





Roanoke Island is only about 12 miles (19 km) long and 3 miles (5 km) wide



**Fort Raleigh was the first English settlement built in North America.**

## Fort Raleigh

The visit by Raleigh's English ships led to the settlement of the area's first colony. One hundred male settlers built Fort Raleigh on Roanoke Island in 1585. The local Native Americans taught the Englishmen to fish and grow maize. But the settlers turned against them. The conflict led to months of fighting. The local Roanoke chief was killed. The colonists soon left Fort Raleigh on English ships.





**Virginia Dare was the first English baby born in North America.**

## John White and Virginia Dare

Raleigh assembled a second group of about 110 settlers. They put artist Fort Raleigh veteran John White in charge. The colonists landed on the Outer Banks in July 1587. They soon started building the Roanoke Colony. White's daughter Eleanor Dare gave birth to a daughter named Virginia the next month. She was the first English child born in North America. The colony soon ran short of food. White sailed for England to get supplies.



# The Lost Colony

A war with Spain delayed White's return to the Roanoke Colony by almost three years. The colonists had disappeared when he returned. Not even the houses remained. White found the word *Croatoan* carved on a tree trunk. It was the name of a nearby island and native people. Bad weather prevented him from investigating the clue. The fate of the Lost Colony of Roanoke remains a mystery to this day.

**No one knows what happened to the original Roanoke colonists.**

John White and his men found just a single dead body on Roanoke Island.

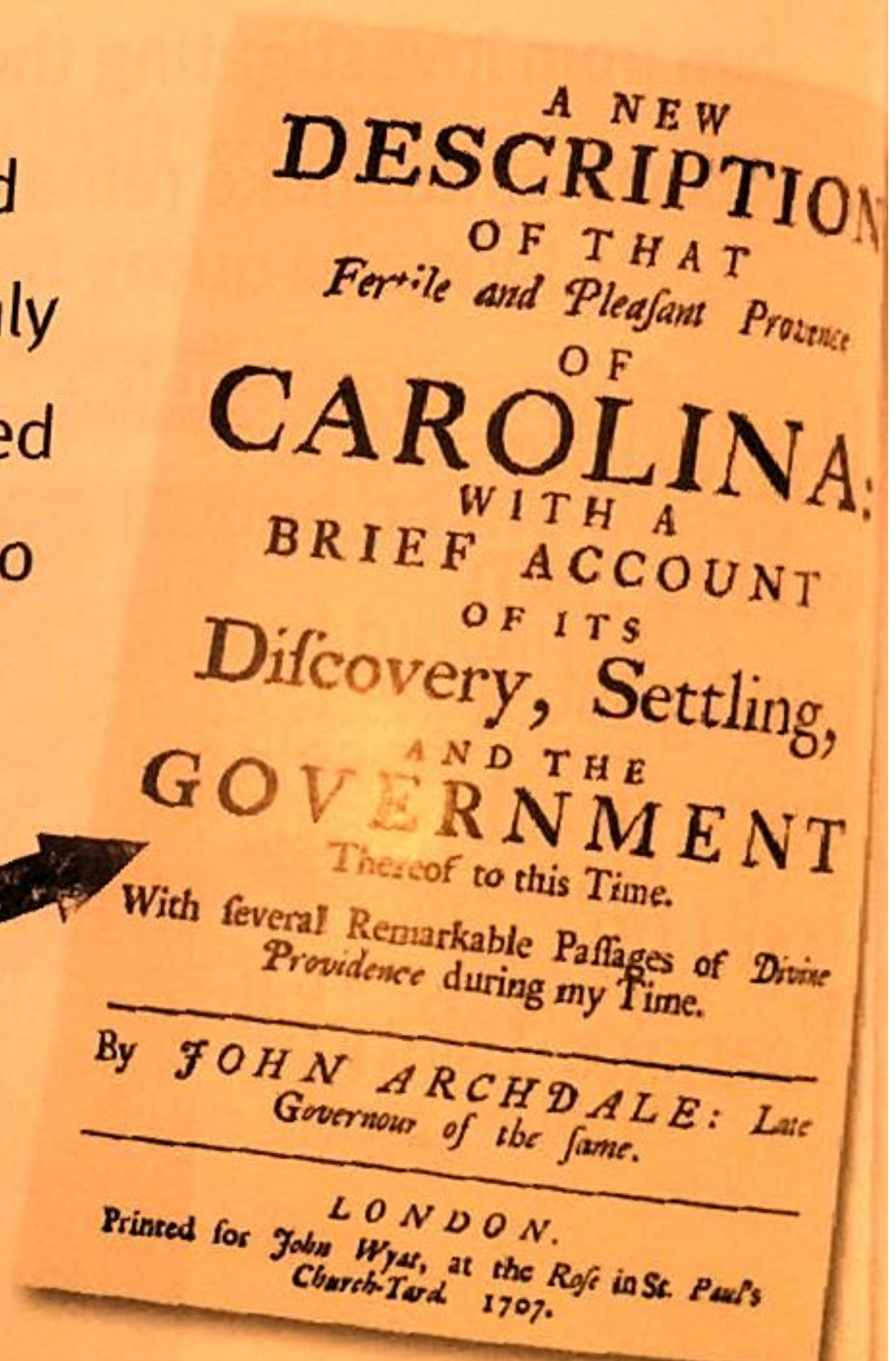




## Trying Again

The English concentrated on the Virginia colony in the early 1600s. King Charles II gave eight **proprieters** the land of today's Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina in 1660. They published pamphlets and newspaper articles to convince people to settle in these new colonies. But the high rents the proprieters wanted for land scared off many people. Only when the proprieters lowered the fees did settlers begin to take their offer.

The first permanent Carolina settlements were founded during the 1650s.





Life in the new colonies often involved a lot of hard work.



## A New Government

The proprietors ran the Carolinas as a single colony. They wrote the Fundamental Constitutions in 1669. This established the colony's government. A governor ran the colony but took advice from a Grand Council. The colony's landowners also elected a **legislature** called an assembly. The constitutions granted religious freedom to all settlers. This was an unusual idea at the time. But the freedoms still failed to draw settlers to the northern part of Carolina.





**Tobacco was an important crop for North Carolina's farmers.**

It takes about four months for tobacco farmers to grow plants from seeds to harvest.

Parliament, England's legislature, added to Carolina's trouble by taxing farmers on their tobacco shipments to other colonies. Protests over the taxes led to violence between growers and the governor selected by the proprietors. Peace returned for a while. But a new law canceled the religious freedom enjoyed by Carolina settlers in 1703.



## Troubled Times

The loss of religious freedom badly affected the Quakers. The Quakers were often **persecuted** for their beliefs. They managed to convince the Carolina governor to ignore the law. But worse trouble lay ahead. Two groups of armed settlers fought over religious freedom in the colony in 1711. The Tuscarora attacked settlements that same year. They had been mistreated by the colonists for years. These attacks began a two-year period of Native American assaults on villages and farms.


Colonists were sometimes forced to flee from attacking Indians.





# Everyday Life

Farming was North Carolina's main occupation. Some of the poorer farmers came to the colony as indentured servants. An indentured servant agreed to work for several years for an employer. He or she did this in return for the employer's paying the fare to North Carolina. Other farmers managed their own way to North Carolina. They bought or rented land.



Some indentured servants were given money or land once their contracts ended.



The North Carolina **militia** and Indian **allies** defeated the Tuscarora in a bloody battle on March 25, 1713. Some Tuscarora moved to New York to live with other Iroquois peoples. But the colony faced a new problem even as the war ended in February 1715. Pirates had begun attacking Carolina's trading



ships off the coast. The most famous pirate was Edward Teach. He was also known as Blackbeard. He commanded an entire fleet of ships. The authorities did not clear Carolina's waters of pirates until about 1718.

Many people told stories of Blackbeard's legendary hidden treasure for years after his death.

**Blackbeard terrorized merchants along the coasts of Virginia and the Carolinas.**





**North Carolina began to grow more quickly after becoming a royal colony.**

## Royal Colony

The British government was growing impatient with North Carolina's lack of rent-paying settlers and tax-dodging farmers. It bought North Carolina from the proprietors in 1729 and turned it into a royal colony under direct control of the British government. Great Britain attempted to attract settlers by offering protection by the British army and navy. This helped boost North Carolina's population.





**Colonial women  
did the different  
household tasks.**

## Women at Work

Farm families lived in wooden homes with a fireplace and simple handmade furniture.

Women were responsible for keeping up the home and cooking. They also mended clothes and tended gardens. Families were often large. Women spent a great deal of time caring for the children. Some women also made and sold items such as clothing or candles.



## Men on the Farm

Men plowed the fields and planted crops. They also brought in the crops at harvesttime. Older children and wives helped. North Carolina farmers were famous for growing tobacco. But they also produced maize, wheat, peas, and rice. Rope was made from the fiber of hemp, a tall, leafy plant. Colonists also grew flax. They spun it into linen thread to make clothing. Farmers obtained meat from livestock such as cows, horses, and pigs.

Today, North Carolina produces more tobacco than any other state.





# Childhood

Children started doing chores at a young age. Older boys often worked in the fields alongside their fathers. Older girls spent time helping their mothers with work in or near the house. North Carolina had few schools. Some children learned reading and writing at home. Others did not learn it at all. Sometimes boys left home around age 12 to spend a number of years as an **apprentice** to a tradesman. They learned skills such as carpentry or barrel making.



**Colonial families depended on their children to help with farmwork.**



In 1729, North Carolina was home to about 6,000 slaves.



**North Carolina's agriculture depended upon enslaved laborer.**

## Slaves

Wealthy North Carolina tobacco farmers came to rely on slave labor in the 1700s. Some enslaved people came from other colonies. But many were kidnapped in Africa and brought over on ships. Enslaved people could be beaten or sold away from their families as their owner wished. Their children also became enslaved. A very few enslaved people were able to earn enough money to buy freedom. This was done by becoming a tradesman or by growing and selling small amounts of tobacco.